of perseverance in close buying, cash or short credit selling, and the adoption of the newest and most businesslike methods, gradually supplant the old-fashioned, long credit, musty goods shop-keeper, and build up a paying trade, as some in Canada have done. Good judgment and economy, combined with hard work and close dunning, do wonders sometimes. But the men who possess these qualities are rare, and we doubt, considering the tone of his letter, whether "Medio" is among them.

He goes on to say: "I contend that a man of nerve and push is bound to make a success if he sticks to it and gets a fair show. It ought to be just as possible to make money out of store-keeping to-day as it was twenty or five-and-twenty years ago, when some of the prosperous merchants of our towns, and countrysides, none too clever men, made theirs." Nerve and push are valuable; determination is an excellent thing; but however much a man may resolve to succeed he will find that this alone will not carry him to his goal. Many a worthy shop-keeper has worn out his "nerve" with his "push," honestly striving to make money, but not succeeding because the conditions were against him. One thing "Medio" seems to forget, viz., that the profits of twenty-five years ago are not possible now; another thing, that the expenses of doing business and of living are much greater. The turn-over of merchandise has to be much larger now than in 1860 or thereabout to yield a living to the trader. Then trade has got into different channels, and a country store-keeper is deprived of sources of profit in "truck-dealing" or barter which were easily obtained in earlier days.

A great fault among wholesale merchants of to-day lies in this: that in dispensing credit to new applicants, many do so without informing themselves upon the history, character, and ability of the men to whom they sell; without proper consideration of the effect of another shop upon their customers in a place; and without sufficient knowledge of the capability of a district to support a new store. "I don't ask odds of anybody if I am going to make a start at store-keeping in a new district," says "Medio." * * * * "If I know my business I don't care how many competitors I have got, I can get credit and can make trade."

Here we join issue with him. He does take odds if he asks credit, for he asks the wholesale dealer to share the risk by crediting. It is unfortunately quite true that he "can get credit;" too much of it, possibly. But making trade and making money are not the same thing. And furthermore, if he does not care how many competitors he has, and does not make their number a factor in determining whether and where he shall begin his shop-keeping, he is by no means so clever a fellow as he thinks.

If any man deserves to succeed, it is the shrewd, industrious, experienced trader for cash, who puts honesty and brains into his work. If he can crowd out some lazy, incompetent slovens who precede and surround him, and makes money, he does the community a service in these days of lax credit on the part of both importer and retailer. By all means let us have push and energy in business, but do not let it be of the bustling, over-trading sort that takes no measure of the trader's surroundings and reasonable possibilities.

THE ARITHMETIC OF ASSESSMENT LIFE INSURANCE.

The combined experience of all carefully conducted life insurance companies shows that the average healthy man thirty years of age will live about thirty-four years longer. There are co-operative societies which claim that the entire cost to members of that age, at the present time, apart from expense charges, is about $6.00 a year. Take this sum and multiply it by thirty-four years, this will give exactly $204. So the average man would, at that rate, pay in only $204, *plus* expenses, and his family draw out $1,000. As this is the average man's life and experience, then it follows that the society, as a whole, would pay out $1,000 for every $204 received.

No intelligent person can believe this possible. Therefore the question: how much must the assessment be increased, in order that the society may be sustained? As its only source of income is from assessments upon those willing and able to pay, it must receive from members all it pays to members, and enough in addition to provide for all needful expenses. This is equivalent to saying that while some members may pay more and others less than $1,000, the average member, or the members as a whole, pay in just $1,000 for each $1,000 paid out. And as the average man, thirty years of age, will live thirty-four years, his average annual payment will be one thirty-fourth part of $1,000, which is $29.41, *plus* expenses.

Life insurance companies collect a stated sum or premium, of which a good part is immediately invested, bearing interest, and therefore a less sum than $29.41 answers their purpose, expenses and all. But when nothing is laid by to accumulate, and all death losses paid by the society come directly from its members, it is a simple problem in common arithmetic to find what the average member must pay—viz., $29.41.

Say that eleven men form a society, and agree to pay $1,000 to the widow or children of each member, at his death. The widow of the first man who dies gets a thousand dollars for next to nothing. The payments of the last man to die, whether he lives to seventy or to ninety, are as follows:

1st	death, one-tenth of $1,000......	$100 00
2nd	" one-ninth of 1,000......	111 12
3rd	" one-eighth of 1,000......	125 00
4th	" one-seventh of 1,000......	142 86
5th	" one-sixth of $1,000........	166 68
6th	" one-fifth of 1,000........	200 00
7th	" one-fourth of $1,000......	250 00
8th	" one-third of $1,000........	333 34
9th	" one-half of $1,000........	500 00
10th	" all of the $1,000..........	1000 00

The eleventh man has paid......$2,929 00

At his own death there will be none of the eleven living to pay, and therefore his widow must get her $1,000 from his estate, thus assessing him in all $3,929. This is as much *more than* $1,000 as the other members as a whole paid *less than* $1,000.

To vary the illustration, let us suppose that new members have been taken in, so that the number in the society remains for some time constant at eleven. Beginning with eleven, a new man is initiated as fast as one dies. Let this continue until there have been thirty members in all enrolled, though only eleven are members at any one time. The widow of the first member who dies receives $1,000 free of cost to him. That death costs each living member just $100, and each succeeding death costs the remaining members just the same until the twenty-first death. This twenty-first $1,000, however, assessed upon the remaining nine of the original thirty members, costs each $111.12. The next death costs each of the remaining eight just $125, the same as in the foregoing table, until the last man pays for the last ten deaths a total amount as above, of $2,929; for the preceding twenty he has paid $2,000; then his own will cost his estate $1,000; his total contributions being $5,929.

It is thus easily seen that the larger the society, the greater the number who will contribute little and receive much, and therefore the more expensive to the last man in the society, when the final wind up or smash up comes. In a society of eleven, the eleventh man's estate is put in for only $3,929, while in a society of thirty, his estate pays $5,929. And if we take a society of 1,000 members, each of them only ten years of age at entry, the cost to the last of them who dies, if the family of each receives $1,000 at his death from the survivors, will be exactly $10,000, *plus* his share of the cost of transacting the business. That is to say, that on account of the death of so many members before paying in their $1,000 those who live the longest must pay in enough to make up the aggregate deficiency; and the last of the long livers will have paid the above sum and expenses for the $1,000 his widow receives. Any of our readers who has a Combined Experience Mortality Table at hand can easily verify our figures by adding up the column headed 'Dying," from age ten to age ninety-nine inclusive.

It will be observed that we have dealt only with "THE ARITHMETIC OF ASSESSMENT LIFE INSURANCE," and that the lessons we have given are very easy to comprehend by anyone having even a slight acquaintance with figures. We pause here, and advise the reader to go carefully over the figures again, and see whether he would care—if he were likely to prove one of the longest livers—to be within the walls of a life insurance society conducted on the assessment principle. If he would not, for financial reasons, then let him consider the morality of inducing others by his example to contribute to a scheme from which he intends to withdraw when the calls of the widow and orphan become double and quadruple what they are at present.

MR. CRAWFORD has this week bought a lot in Woodstock from Messrs. Gardner and Rose for $2,500, and is arranging for the immediate erection of a fine three-storey brick store for himself.